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## Manufacturing Industries

*The Tin-Plate Industry. A Comparative Study of its Growth in the United States and in Wales.* By D. E. DUNBAR. Hart, Schaffner & Marx Prize Essays, XX. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Pp. 133. \$1.00.)

The tinplate industry has received a great deal of attention both because of its spectacular rise in this country after the adoption of the highly protective duties in 1890 and because of the vicissitudes which tinplate manufacturing has undergone in free-trade Wales after the loss of the American market.

Mr. Dunbar, like Mr. Jones in his recently published monograph on the same subject, considers the changes in the technique of production, the conditions of labor in the various branches of the work, and the formation of associations and combinations for the purpose of controlling the making and the marketing of tin plates. The book concludes with an analysis of the import and export trade and with an attempt to ascertain what light the history of the tinplate industry in the United States throws on the policy of "protection to young industries." The writer grants that high duties stimulated production, but he is of the opinion that the prime factors in the wonderful development were technical progress, an efficient labor supply, cheap and abundant raw materials, good organization, and enormous markets. These conclusions are undoubtedly correct.

One may challenge Mr. Dunbar's statement that the formation of the American Tinplate Company was due to unhealthy competition; it was rather the desire on the part of the manufacturer to exploit to the full the advantages of a protected market which led first to "gentlemen's agreements" and when these proved unsatisfactory to the consolidation of interests in the trade. Mr. Dunbar's own narrative does not bear out his statement. He adds to it on page 103, "to be sure not a single firm had failed in the period of drastic competition in the nineties *and profits were still good*, but there were altogether too many firms in the field"; and on page 77, he writes, "although not a single firm had failed during this period of competition *the falling rate of profit was not regarded with satisfaction* by the manufacturers who made several unsuccessful attempts to stop the decline." No manufacturers regard with satisfaction a falling rate of profit, but is a falling rate of profit identical with unhealthy competition?" Professor Taussig in *Some Aspects of the Tariff Question*, referring to the formation

of the American Tinplate Company, states (pp. 177-178): "the protective tariff became the mother of a trust, and that trust exploited the possibilities of protected monopoly"; and again (p. 181): "at no time after 1901 was there such an exploitation of the tariff as in the year immediately after the Tinplate Company was formed."

The author disposes effectively of the manufacturers' claims that they still need the retention of duties on tin plates; he shows the untenability of the "pauper labor" argument as well as of the arguments that the Welsh producer is enjoying a lower cost of tinplate bars, that the interest and maintenance charges in the American industry are larger than in Wales and that the producers in this country are under disadvantages in freight rates. Mr. Dunbar's discussion of the sales of American tin plates in Canada at a lower price than in the United States seems futile, and one is rather surprised to find it in the book. One misses a more extensive account of the legislative history of the industry; as to the "fascinating industrial history" it is stripped of all its fascination in the writer's survey. Many topics are treated too briefly to permit of anything but a colorless chronicle of events. The book shows a careful study of the literature of the subject and it gives one a comprehensive idea of the tinplate industry both in its immediate and its larger aspects.

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#### NEW BOOKS

ADCOCK, K. J. *Leather; from the raw material to the finished product.* (New York: Pitman. 1915. Pp. 161. 75c.)

BULLOCK, W. *Timber; from the forest to its use in commerce.* (New York: Pitman. 1915. Pp. 149. 75c.)

VAN DELDEN, I. W. *Studien über die indische Juteindustrie.* (Munich: Duncker & Humblot. 1915. Pp. vii, 182. 5 M.)

GARDNER, W. M. *The British coal-tar industry.* (London: Williams & Norgate. 1915. Pp. 448. 10s. 6d.)

HAFFARDS, G. M. & Co. *Fall River and its manufactories. 1803-1914.* Twenty-first edition, revised. (Fall River: Mass.: G. E. Bamford. 1915. 15c.)

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